

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

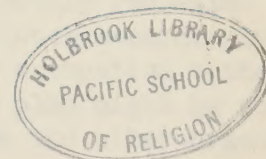
Annual Subscription: \$3.00

17, ROUTE DE MALAGNOU, GENEVA
297 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 10

Printed in the U. S. A.

Tel.: GRamercy 5-3475 — Cable Address: "Worcil"

under the auspices of
the WORLD COUNCIL of CHURCHES (in process of formation)
the INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL
the WORLD ALLIANCE of YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
the WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
the WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION
the WORLD COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



The aim of the Ecumenical Press Service is to keep its readers informed of trends of thought and opinion in and about the Churches and Christian movements. It is therefore not to be held responsible for opinions expressed in its news items.

No. 9

Sixteenth Year

March 4, 1949

GERMANY

International Refugee Conference in Hamburg

The special significance of the Hamburg conference lies in the fact that here, from February 22 to 25, the World Council of Churches, through its Refugee Division, was able to discuss the refugee problem with non-ecclesiastical authorities responsible for refugees in Germany. The atmosphere of unanimity and joint responsibility provided an indispensable background to planning which will, it is hoped, proved really fruitful. While fully recognising the value of the work done by the International Refugee Organisation for refugees, the Rev. Henry Carter, Chairman of the Hamburg conference, had been trying for some time to draw world attention to the fact that in addition to the D.P. question there is the problem of the eleven million refugees of German origin, and that its solution is absolutely essential to European recovery. At the same time, the Marshall Plan legislation had officially recognised that Germany must be included in the plan for Western European reconstruction. Economic recovery by Western Germany is not, however, possible without a simultaneous solution of the refugee problem.

Preparations for the Hamburg meeting were made in consultation with the British Foreign Office (see E.P.S. No. 5). Three of the four Regional Commissioners in the British Zone, the Chairman of the Allied Tripartite Commission Mr. Logan Gray, his American colleague Mr. Edward Lawrence, Mrs. Wagstaff and other representatives of the Military Governments were present, in addition to observers from the American and French Zones. Dr Schreiber, the new Chairman, and Dr Middelman represented the German Bizonal Refugee Office. Among representatives of the German Länder governments were Dr Albertz, the Minister for Refugees, of Hanover, and Dr Kehren, the Ministerial Director, from Düsseldorf. Delegations from the Churches of Great Britain, the German Churches (President Niemöller, Bishop Lilje, Dr Gerstenmaier and others) and observers from the Roman Catholic Church brought the number of those present up to eighty.

During two days of deliberation, proposals for solution of the problem were submitted and recommendations passed. These include industrial settlement programmes, agricultural settlement, housing, emigration (it is thought that approximately one-tenth of the German refugees should emigrate),

12 ROUTE DE WILHELMSTRASSE
67 FOURTH AVENUE NEW YORK 17

The German Press - German Language

about the refugees

THE WORLD JOURNAL OF CHRISTIANITY AND PEACE
A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
12 ROUTE DE WILHELMSTRASSE
67 FOURTH AVENUE NEW YORK 17

March 4, 1949

Sixteenth Year

No. 9

International Refugee Conference in Hamburg

GERMANY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

The special significance of the Hamburg conference lies in the fact that here, from February 22 to 25, the World Council of Churches, through its Refugee Division, was able to discuss the refugee problem with non-ecumenical authorities responsible for refugees in Germany. The importance of ecumenical and joint relief efforts is obvious. While this responsibility is shared by the Lutheran, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish churches, the value of the work done by the Lutheran conference, has been trying for the Rev. Henry Gager, Chairman of the Hamburg conference, to the fact that in addition to the D.F. some time to draw world attention to the fact that in addition to the D.F. question there is the problem of the eleven million refugees of German origin, and that the solution is absolutely essential to German recovery. At the same time, the Marshall Plan legislation had officially recognized that Germany must be included in the plan for German European reconstruction. Economic recovery by western Germany is not, however, possible without a simultaneous solution of the refugee problem.

Preparations for the Hamburg meeting were made in cooperation with the British Foreign Office (L. 10. 1. 49). Three of the British representatives in the British zone, the Chairman of the British Refugee Commission, Mr. Nathan Gager, his American colleague, Mr. Nathan Gager, and other representatives of the American and British Governments were present, in addition to observers from the American and British Refugee Offices. new Chairman, and Dr. Albrecht represented the German Refugee Office. Among representatives of the German Lutheran government were Dr. Albrecht, the Minister for Refugees, of Hannover, and Dr. Kasper, the Ministerial Director from Dusseldorf. Delegates from the Churches of Great Britain, the German Churches (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and others), the Evangelical and others) and observers from the Roman Catholic Church through the number of those present up to eighty.

vocational training and education. On the closing day of the conference the Refugee Division of the World Council of Churches was unanimously requested to examine the practical proposals put forward, and to get in touch accordingly with the European Recovery Plan Administration and with the occupation authorities and German Länder, in order that the effecting of the plan might be ensured, in agreement with the German Reconstruction Committee and other organisations taking part in this work.

A Message to the Churches of the world was approved and published, from which we quote;

"At the first international conference on refugee problem to be held within Germany, we are met together to seek ways of helping those who have been expelled from their homeland... The extent and magnitude of the problem indicate that the German people cannot bear the burden and complete the task in isolation.

"God has led us to see that the nations of the earth will take as their path for the future a way of mutual responsibility and service to one another- or we have no future!

"Those who endure the cruel fate of the refugees are no better and no worse than those who have been able to preserve their homes and their possessions. We should acknowledge that what we have already done as Christians to relieve the burden and solve the problem is not enough, and that it falls short of the demands which obedience to our Lord places upon us...

"Hence, we plead not only for the recognition of human rights as proclaimed by the United Nations, but also for their practical application in the form of a magnanimous solution of the present refugee problem, internationally planned and carried out by the society of nations. Without waiting to ask whether our appeals and petitions will be heard and acted upon, we are determined ever and again to appeal to our own parishes and Churches to render aid and to encourage self-help...

"We plead that the way may be open for divine grace and the initiative which have appeared among us and among the refugees themselves and are already in action, and those efforts may not be allowed to decline under the great burdens of everyday life, but may be continually inspired and encouraged...

"The fate of the refugee should remind us how transitory all earthly values are and should teach us through the doing of good works 'to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven' which shall abide. If we will live up to this rich blessing will follow, according to the promise of that same Lord who crosses our path today in the person of the poor and suffering."

From the resolutions adopted by the Hamburg conference we quote the following:

"This Conference:- Confident that there are real and practicable possibilities of a constructive solution, provided that a concerted German self-help effort at rehabilitation is assisted by an adequate foreign aid pro-

"Resolves 1. That the European Cooperation Administration be urged to earmark an adequate and substantial percentage of Dollar aid and corresponding Counterpart Funds, under Economic Recovery Programme and within the policies and appropriations established for Germany, for the rehabilitation of refugees and expelled persons...

"2... It is further urged that, in view of international responsibility for this problem, the proposed Amendment should authorise ERP aid for the German Refugee Programme as on a grant basis without establishing a 'claim' against Germany.

"3. That the European Cooperation Administration be urged to assist and facilitate in every way possible the working out and development of such a German Refugee Programme, in accordance with ERP policies of 'self-help and mutual cooperation'...

"The Conference noting with gratitude the initiative in approaching this whole problem which has been taken by the World Council of Churches, further resolves that the Refugee Division of the World Council of Churches be ...requested to study and amplify the proposals for action... always having regard to the basic principle of German self-help and German leadership and the paramount necessity of securing the close and active cooperation of the German Church Reconstruction Committee and other appropriate agencies, to take immediate and all necessary steps to make possible the implementation of these proposals in so far as they prove practicable, and their integration into an overall German Refugee Rehabilitation Programme."

E.P.S. Geneva

PALESTINE

Church Worlds Service Aid

Altogether, relief goods and funds, totalling in value \$100,000, were sent through Church World Service (New York) to aid the half million refugees in Palestine and bordering states. About one-half of the shipments have been made up of clothing, including heavy garments for the cold mountainous areas of the Middle East, and lighter ones for the warm areas, such as Sidon. Medical supplies, valued at \$16,500 and including 200,000 atabrine tablets, hospital and surgical supplies and vitamin tablets, have been of assistance in many of the crowded and ill-equipped refugee camps where epidemics of cholera and other diseases are continual menaces. A shipment of 4,000 pounds of powdered milk helped to relieve the needs in one camp where there were thousands of children and infants suffering from malnutrition.

E.P.S. Geneva

GERMANY

Two Ecclesiastical Papers to Reappear

The "Junge Kirche" (Young Church), being a very popular periodical of the Confessing Church at its time and which was forbidden by Goebbels in 1934, is reappearing in Göttingen under the editorship of Fritz Söhlmann. The federal papers of the German Evangelical Pastors' Association "Deutsches Pfarrerbblatt", the issue of which was suspended for quite a time after Germany's collapse, is now being reissued upon instructions of the Union of Evangelical Pastors' Associations in Germany under the editorship of Lic. Ludwig Seiler.

E.P.S. Geneva

Calendar of Ecumenical Meetings in 1949

March	2-8	Ecum.Institute	"Evangelism in the Modern World"
	16-21	"	Study Conference on Press
	17-22	Bex	Annual Conference of the Reconstruction Department of the World Council of Churches
	28-31	Ecum.Institute	"The Church and the Jewish People"
April	1-4	"	"The Church and Politics"
	8-12	"	"The Meaning of Work"
	21-29	Northampton	Conference of European Leaders of Church Youth
	29-May 3	Ecum.Institute	"Men and Women in Industry"
May	9-June 2	"	Youth Leaders' Course
June	8-24	"	Study Course for Ministers
	13-18	Greenwich, Conn.	Council of United Bible Societies
	20-27	Geneva	Executive Committee World's Y.W.C.A.
	28-July 6	Oxford	Conference of the Study Department of the World Council of Churches
July	4-12	Mainau	Executive Committee of World Alliance of YMCAs
	6-9	Chichester	Executive Committee World Council of Churches
	6-28	Ecum.Institute	Study Course for Theological Students
	9-15	Chichester	Central Committee World Council of Churches
	9-Sept. 3	Châtaigneraie	Study Course World's Y.W.C.A.
	16-19	Oxford	Executive Committee Lutheran World Federation
	16-20	Chichester	Continuation Committee of Faith and Order
	16-23	Lausanne	World Christian Youth Commission
	25-29	Lausanne	Committee of Youth Department of World Council of Churches
August	1-7	Ecum.Institute	"The Meaning of History"
	9-22	Whitby, Canada	General Committee of World's Student Christian Federation
	10-25	Ecum.Institute	"The Christian in Education"
	31-Sept. 5	"	"Christianity in Art"
Sept.	9-15	"	Conference of members of the Medical Profession
October	15-Nov. 7	"	Course for Missionaries on furlough

UNITED STATESChurches Unite for World Relief

In an "unprecedented demonstration of Christian cooperation" over 75,000 Churches across the United States - representing nearly every major Christian denomination - have joined in a programme to strengthen and rebuild the physical and spiritual life of the suffering people in Europe and Asia.

This "one great effort for one great cause" will culminate during the hour between ten and eleven on Saturday night, March 26, when the programme - One Great Hour - will be broadcast for America's Churches over virtually every major radio station in the country.

"One Great Hour" will dramatise the work being done through America's Churches in Europe and Asia. It will close with an appeal to the people of America to go to church the next day, Sunday, March 27, and make there a truly sacrificial gift which will be received in the name of Christ for all humanity.

It is believed that this great inter-faith radio programme will reach an audience of over 50,000,000 people. It is hoped that contributions on this one Sunday, March 27, will provide a large part of the funds necessary for the work of the many Churches overseas during 1949.

The board of governors is composed of the following members: Mrs. Henry Sloane Coffin; Dr Franklin C. Fry; Mrs. Douglas Horton; William M. Ramsey; Harper Sibley; Bishop Herbert Welch. E.P.S. Geneva

GREAT BRITAINA Council for Ecumenical Cooperation

The Spring Session of the Church of England Assembly opened on February 21, and was presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

One of the important questions discussed at the Session was that of an adequate representation of the Church of England to the World Council of Churches. A Council of Churches Commission presented a report, introduced by the Bishop of Chichester. The task of the Commission was to outline a body which could represent the Church of England to the World Council of Churches and the British Council and report from these Councils to the Assembly. In answer it proposed a new Council, which should be called the Council for Ecumenical Cooperation and be composed of the members chosen to represent the Church of England on both the World Council and the British Council.

After a debate the Assembly approved the setting up of the new Council, though it refused to decide on the number of members at this stage, and approved also the title. E.P.S. Geneva

CHINASherwood Eddy's Impressions

After visiting war-torn China where he delivered a series of addresses Mr. Sherwood Eddy, well-known American evangelist, left for India. There he has written an article for "The Guardian" (Madras, January 20, 1949), expressing his opinion on the political, education and social situation in China.

Like several other observers, Sherwood Eddy takes the view that "the Church is now forced to return to Apostolic conditions under which the early Church thrived". He quotes the opinion of a pastor from Shensi, where pastors and Churches have been cooperating in Communist-held territory for ten years, who testified that pastors were free to lead their churches under four conditions; "1) Their mode of living must be like the common people in dress, dwelling and food; 2) They must earn their living by farming, trade or industry, since preaching is not regarded as a 'productive' vocation; 3) Their character must be Christ-like, as testified to by their neighbours in the recurring trials and purges conducted by the Communists; and 4) Their faith must be Apostolic, i.e. fearless, sure of the Gospel, patient under persecution, and ready to die for their faith if necessary - as the Communists themselves are ready to die for theirs...

"It was felt that it would be impossible for some Christians to adjust themselves to the new social order which had arisen, partly because these Christians have not borne witness to the evils of the old order... Many Christians will have to adopt new methods and new ways and sometimes a new spirit".

As to the future probabilities, Sherwood Eddy, on the basis of a study of the Communist regions in North China, in northern Korea and in Russia itself on fifteen visits from 1912 to 1939, states; "1) The Churches and individual Christians will survive in China as they have in Soviet Russia; 2) Medical missions can probably be carried on as long as we are willing to support them; 3) Christian education, while probably tolerated at first, will gradually be eliminated. Education will be regarded as a function of the State for training in citizenship... and completely dominated by Communist propaganda. Indignant that Chinese scholars, knowing their artistic writings for some 3,500 years, have left 400 million illiterate peasants in poverty and ignorance, the Communists will gradually introduce compulsory education...

"Certain aspects of Chinese character - that irresponsible individualism described as a 'heap of sand' - will be greatly modified. In a fiery furnace sand is forged into rock under terrific pressure and heat."

The suffering, darkness and danger occasioned by the civil war in China "make that country the neediest on earth, but it is the most fruitful field for student evangelism in the world today".

Everywhere large audiences gathered to hear the message of Mr. Eddy. In Canton, for instance, the owner of the largest moving picture theatre gave his theatre, which was filled with 1,800 people, on Saturday night for an hour and a half free of charge. The non-Christian mayor of Canton invited 300 leaders of the city to hear the Christian message. "Our audiences in every city have been limited to a thousand a night", concludes Mr. Eddy, "simply because there was not even standing room for more". As already reported, the leaders of the National Christian Council of China feel that it is no time for pessimism, but "an hour of tremendous opportunity".

E.P.S.Geneva

CHINAChristian Schools must go on

Ninety principals of Christian colleges and middle schools of East China gathered in Shanghai agreed that Christian schools should adjust themselves to any kind of social change which is not against Christian teaching.

In view of the probable nationalisation of education by the Communists, it was proposed that schools in various areas organise as a unit to promote enterprises such as cooperatives as a means of providing funds to carry on the work.

If Communists ban religious meetings and religious teachings, it was agreed, "Christian teachers must continue to preach the Gospel through the testimony of their own lives".

E.P.S. Geneva

U.S.S.R.Disputation

The Union of Evangelical Christians in the U.S.S.R., formed by the Evangelical revivalist movement, an increasing number of Baptists, the Pentecostal movement and other Christian sects with no fixed ecclesiastical organisation, is today working out a detailed constitution (see E.P.S. No. 4).

This is significant in that the "dynamic development" of the Union across the borders of European Russia (there are now Evangelical Christians in the Asiatic Republics of the U.S.S.R.) has had most important effects tending towards the formation of a Church. Where before 1918 these Christian groups usually spoke of a "Church" as a "community of prayer", the expression "Church units" is now almost universally used. The "doctrine of the Church" is given in detail in Volume 4 of the Union's periodical "Bratsky Vestnik", in the form of a "disputation".

"In His work of salvation for men", runs the introduction, "God created the Church from among them". There is "firstly, an invisible, all-embracing Church, secondly, the visible Church, limited in space, and thirdly, the Church in the home."

"What is the universal Church? The fellowship of redeemed souls, penitent, converted and born anew, from all ages, nations and Churches, and of the Churches of the Christian home, on earth as in heaven, i.e. 'the Church that knows the manifold wisdom of God' (Eph. 3:10). It is the 'Kingdom of God', where 'God reigns in Christ'.

"The visible Church, with its limitations, is composed of many local churches of souls united by the same Christian creed and spiritual rebirth. It has the task of 'establishing the Kingdom of Christ among its members and spreading it abroad in the world'. Communities of the visible Church may vary in structure and in their interpretation of certain passages of Scripture. In their 'mutual intercession', however, and in their parallel work, they are none the less Christ's, as long as they hold fast to 'freedom as Christ preached it'.

"Adherence to the invisible Church does not release men from the duty of belonging to one visible Church, which is, with other visible Churches, 'according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened' (Eph. 3:16).

The election and installation of the servants of the Church - elders, pastors or bishops - "formerly by the Apostles, and now by those called to be the highest servants of Christian brotherhood", must not be surrendered by the Church to any man, within or without.

E.P.S.Geneva

Ecumenical Work Camps

There are work camps in Europe of several thousand young people working in huge national brigades. They are able to build whole railroad lines across countries, construct highways, level mountains and fill in valleys. Besides them certain small camps of 20-40 look weak and helpless.

What are these small camps and what is their task? They are the ecumenical work camps, organised under the auspices of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches.

The Youth Department has the task of helping young people everywhere to uphold all "that the ecumenical movement stands for - Christ Himself who calls us to unity, witness and discipleship".

A World Council camp is therefore a small group of young people drawn from different Churches and countries living and working together on some project of Christian significance. It corresponds very nearly in miniature to a definition of "ecumenical" as the whole Church in the whole world related to the whole of life.

There will be 10 work camps this summer at Le Chambon-sur-Lignon (France), Agape (Italy), Stuttgart, Munich, Espelkamp and Köln (Germany), Partaharju (Finland), and possibly in two places in Austria. Some 600 people are expected to participate.

In the "Ecumenical Work Camps News-Letter", which gives more details on the whole scheme, Miss Jean Fraser, Director of the Youth Department, characterises some of them as follows:

"Agape - witnessing to the love of God which transcends frontiers; Le Chambon, an experiment in Christian education and community life; Espelkamp, the transformation by the German Church relief organisation of a munitions dump into a resettlement centre; Stuttgart, the Church reaching out to a lost and homeless generation. These are the things the World Council is concerned with in its Department of Faith and Order, of Reconstruction, and at the Ecumenical Institute. In work camps we are concerned not with the theory but the practical bricks and mortar of ecumenicity."

E.P.S.Geneva

